



**California Department of Veterans Affairs
Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE) Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes¹, Wednesday, November 19, 2003**

Location

Medal of Honor Hall
California Department of Veterans Affairs
1227 O Street
Sacramento, California, 95814

Participants

DVBE

- Allen Amaro
- Larry Brooks
- Jerry Caton
- Gene Farnsworth
- Don Gonneville
- Ken Jackson
- Michael Johnson
- Floyd Knox
- Bob Mulz
- Kevin O'Connor
- Mike O'Connor
- John Rak
- Jim Stanfield
- Francis Trottier
- Larry Turner

¹ Minutes recorded by Jeff Myers, Desktop Advantage, a state-certified DVBE

- Tim Voors
- Bob Yaap
- A. J. Wilson

CDVA

- Ralph Cansimbe
- Steve Dakota
- Glen Halsey
- Sheryl Schmidt

DGS

- Gloria Anderson
- Patti Connors
- Mariel Dennis
- Lori Okomoto

Special Guest

- Interim Secretary Col. Leon Tuttle, USAF (Ret.)

DVBE Advisory Council Members Absent

- Alison Boyle
- Bill Bruckner

Welcome and Introductions

Don Gonneville, co-chair, CDVA DVBE Advisory Council, opened the meeting at 10:13 a.m. and welcomed the Council and attendees and then turned the meeting over to Glen Halsey, state DVBE advocate and chief, Veterans Services Division (VSD), CDVA.

Mr. Halsey said he was impressed with the number of people attending the meeting and how they were functioning as a Council.

He said Maurice Johannessen had stepped down yesterday and that Leon Tuttle would be the interim Secretary.

Mr. Halsey said the transition was anything but normal and should be interesting.

He then introduced Sheryl Schmidt, Deputy Secretary for Women's Veterans Affairs, CDVA.

Ms. Schmidt welcomed Council members and guests.

She said that had originally planned to stay for the entire meeting but would have to leave early due to the transition.

Mr. Halsey asked Council members and guests to introduce themselves.

He then introduced Ralph Cansimbe and Steve Dakota.

Mr. Halsey said his last day before resigning would be December 31, 2003.

He welcomed new Council members and told them where his office was located should they need phones or to use office equipment.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Halsey called for a motion to approve minutes from the September 17 meeting.

Larry Brooks motioned, seconded by Bob Mulz.

All Council members were in favor. Minutes approved.

Program Update

Mr. Halsey stated that replacing him may take until July 2004, but that Mr. Cansimbe would be there for Council members.

He said Ms. Schmidt and Bruce Thiessen have strong support for the Council and DVBE program.

Mr. Halsey said the two DVBE Advocate positions were still on hold.

Larry Turner asked if Council should back a candidate for the position and push them along through the process.

Mr. Cansimbe said State layoffs could prevent bringing in any new people.

Allen Amaro asked Mr. Cansimbe who appoints DVBE Advocates.

Mr. Halsey said that **he** is the DVBE Advocate and that DGS supplies two separate Advocates.

Larry Turner motioned to send a letter to Mr. Tuttle to fill one Advocate position with Steve Dakota.

Motion seconded by Kevin O'Connor.

Discussion began amongst the Council.

Mr. Amaro said he felt the Council should wait and think this over.

Mr. Cansimbe stated that Mr. Dakota is a candidate, but the layoff process would hold up filling the position.

Bob Mulz stated that the Council needed to be the “fly in the ointment” to the interim Secretary.

Mr. Halsey said he would attempt to set-up a meeting with Mr. Tuttle.

Mr. Halsey called on the Council to vote by a show of hands on sending a letter to the interim Secretary recommending Steve Dakota as DVBE Advocate.

9 were in favor, 6 Members opposed.

Proposal carried.

Mr. Halsey said a letter would also be sent to Mr. Tuttle requesting a meeting with him.

DGS Website Presentation

Lori Okomoto from DGS gave a presentation and tour of DGS website @ 10:45 a.m.

Ms. Okomoto explained how the procurement page works and demonstrated tools and features the Council might find helpful.

She showed the Council how to place an ad on the site and walked them through the process.

Ms. Okomoto stopped her presentation @ 10:55 a.m. when interim Secretary Leon Tuttle appeared before the Council.

Interim Secretary Leon Tuttle

Interim Secretary Leon Tuttle addressed the Council and said he was sympathetic to their efforts.

He said the DVBE program exists and therefore ought to be run right.

Mr. Tuttle said he wished the Council all the best and that he looks fondly on the program.

In his final comments, Mr. Tuttle stated that he wished good luck to all Council Members and that he hoped the program would bear fruit.

The council applauded and Mr. Tuttle left at 11:00 a.m.

DGS Website Presentation Continued

Ms. Okomoto continued her presentation at 11:01 a.m.

Mr. Gonneville urged the Council to take the information about the free services on the site back to their constituents and get the word out.

Mr. Gonneville thanked the Outreach Committee for bringing Ms. Okomoto to the meeting and setting up the presentation.

Ms. Okomoto concluded her presentation at 11:04 a.m.

Introduction of and Vote on Two Prospective Members

Mr. Gonneville asked the Council to discuss prospective members.

Bob Mulz explained what he felt Rondia Moss brought to the table, stating that she was the first woman CPO back in the 80's.

He also said that she's a small business owner and a great family woman.

Mike O'Connor introduced himself as a prospective Council Member and then left the room so the Council could vote.

John Rak stated that he felt the Council was growing large and likened it to a "convention."

He also stated that the Council needed to take more action and that growth doesn't guarantee results.

Mr. Gonneville said that there was a lot of work to be done and the Council would bring in quality people as opposed to quantity.

He said, "Quality is the criteria we use."

Mr. Gonneville also stated that if the Council voted a Member in and later felt they were "dysfunctional", they could always vote said Member out and make a motion to vote on it.

Mr. Amaro said that he felt the Council was growing beyond what DGS had envisioned and that the Council doesn't need 25 or 30 people, as "it's not productive."

Mr. Gonneville said, "The more quality people we have, the better."

Mr. Amaro said more people means "more maintenance."

Larry Brooks suggested the Council get to the issue at hand, voting on the prospective Members as "we've discussed this size issue before."

Council voted on Rondia Moss as Council Member, none opposed. John Rak and Tim Voors abstained.

Council voted on Mike O'Connor as Council Member, none opposed.

John Rak, Allen Amaro, and Francis Trottier abstained.

Voting ended at 11:25 a.m. and Mr. Gonneville congratulated Mike O'Connor on being appointed to the Council.

Consultant, Assembly Committee on Veterans Affairs

Bert McChesney, Chief Consultant Committee on Veterans Affairs, addressed the Council @ 11:26 a.m. and brought greetings from Assemblywoman Parra who was tied up in a meeting.

Mr. McChesney handed out copies of a bill that Ms. Parra introduced, AB 1592.

Mr. McChesney gave an overview of the bill and asked the Council to get back to him with their thoughts.

He said the bill is locked until January and can be amended then.

He asked Council to send suggestions, improvements etc. to his office and gave his phone number: 916-319-3553.

Mike O'Connor thanked Mr. McChesney and his committee for their work.

Mr. McChesney said the deadline to get suggestions to him is mid-December.

Adjourn for Lunch @ 11:44 a.m.**Reconvene @ 12:37 p.m.****CDVA Website**

Mr. Halsey said he would have to leave the meeting early but he would still be around after his retirement and he hoped to continue working with the Council.

He then introduced Steve Dakota who discussed new additions to the CDVA website.

Mr. Dakota said that meeting minutes would now be posted on the site and that he hoped to add a bulletin board as well.

Proposal to Form DGS Liaison/Oversight Committee

Mr. Gonneville handed out printed material of the proposal.

This proposal recommends the Council form a committee to work closely with DGS. Mr. Gonneville asked for a motion to form the committee.

Larry Brooks motioned, seconded by Tim Voors.

Discussion.

Mr. Amaro asked who had written this proposal.

Mr. Gonneville stated that **he** wrote it.

Mariel Dennis of DGS said she didn't feel an oversight committee was needed and she didn't like the use of the word, "oversight."

Ms. Dennis said she preferred the word "liaison" and asked if there had been a lack of cooperation on the part of DGS.

Mr. Gonneville said that there had been many complaints.

Ms. Dennis stated that she had never heard complaints about lack of cooperation.

Mr. Gonneville said DVBE's with complaints need a voice.

Ms. Dennis said, "Bring it on."

Mr. Gonneville said, "Yes, we will bring it on."

He said the DVBE community had been discriminated against and needed a voice to work with DGS and "the voice will be heard." Floyd Knox agreed that "oversight" should be eliminated from the committee name.

Ms. Dennis said she and her staff were committed to working with a liaison committee and asked to move the agenda forward as they needed to catch a plane.

Mr. Halsey said that as DVBE Advocate, DGS had been 100% responsive to him.

Mr. Amaro motioned to table this issue for now under Robert's Rules of Order.

Mr. Gonneville said he didn't mind doing so.

DGS Legislative Update

Patti Connors of DGS said she had reviewed previous meeting minutes to see what had been requested of DGS.

She said that DVBE certification requirements had been updated to include Francis Trottier's point about the 7-day waiting period.

Ms. Connors handed out a DVBE Resource Packet which helps locate certified DVBE's.

Larry Turner asked Ms. Connors if the council could find out who created the DVBE exemption list.

She said she would find out and report back.

Kevin O'Connor said he believed the Exemption list came from the Procurement Committee.

The discussion turned to SB 1008 and DVBE / LLC (Limited Liability Corporation) certification.

Gloria Anderson presented a handout on the DVBE program requirements that identifies changes as a result of AB 669 and SB 1008.

The staff from DGS left the meeting @ 1:55 p.m.

Mr. Gonneville suggested a vote on the Liason Committee.

Mr. Trottier stated that he felt having such a committee was very important.

The Council voted unanimously to create a DGS Liason Committee. Ken Jackson abstained.

Glen Halsey Farewell

At 2:10 p.m. Mr. Halsey said it was his last meeting and that working with the Council had been a real pleasure.

He said, "I commend all of you and your dedication, I know you lose money when you attend these meetings."

Mr. Halsey said it was very important to keep a dialogue with Legislators and that it was a good thing to subscribe via email for legislative updates.

Bob Yaap said he would like to keep the link with Mr. Halsey and DAV.

Mr. Halsey said he would continue sending legislative activity via email to Council Members.

Mr. Halsey said, "It's been a great ride and I hope and pray my successor continues the good fight."

Mr. Halsey received an ovation from the Council and observers and left @ 2:20 p.m.

Formulation of Liaison Committee

Mr. Gonneville asked for volunteers and the following Council Members came forth:

- A.J. Wilson
- Allen Amaro
- Kevin O'Connor
- Mike O'Connor
- Francis Trottier

Mr. Gonneville suggested the Committee meet and elect a Chairperson. He congratulated and thanked them.

Open Discussion

Larry Turner handed out copies of a written response he received after sending a letter to CalTrans regarding Public Law (PL) 106-50.

Mr. Turner also handed out copies of a letter he sent to Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Mr. Dakota requested a motion be put forward to put certified DVBE's on the CDVA website.

Ken Jackson motioned, seconded by Bob Yaap.

All in favor, motion carried @ 2:40 p.m.

Mr. Turner made a motion for the Council to write a letter to CalTrans.

Seconded by Tim Voors.

No opposition, no abstention.

There was a brief discussion on how letters sent out with the Council name on them would be written as well as who would be responsible.

The following will be involved in the writing of official Council letters:

- Larry Turner
- A.J. Wilson
- Bob Yaap

All official Council correspondence will be sent to members via email for approval before being sent out.

Cemeteries/Homes Projects

George Andries had been scheduled to discuss the status of the Veterans Cemetery and Homes projects at this meeting.

Kevin O'Connor suggested that since Mr. Andries didn't show up, perhaps Council Members could go see for themselves what is going on.

Mr. Kevin O'Connor said there was no response, "he just didn't show."

Larry Turner said, "He flat refused to answer."

Gene Farnsworth said that Mr. Turner was correct.

Mr. Farnsworth said he asked Mr. Halsey to put him in contact with Mr. Andries.

He also stated that he contacted the primes several times, heard nothing, and gave up.

Mike O'Connor said he took Mr. Andries to lunch and was told that Maurice Johannessen said 15% of the Vets Homes business would go to DVBE's.

Mr. Mike O'Connor asked, "No one showed up. Who from CDVA has control?"

Bob Mulz said, "It's time to go to their office and shit on their desk!"

Mr. Amaro suggested someone go to a California Veterans Board meeting and ask questions.

Kevin O'Connor said that he would attend a meeting and demand answers.

Committee Assignments

State Agency

- Floyd Knox
- Larry Turner
- Ken Jackson
- Bob Mulz

Committee Assignments Continued

Legislative

- Tim Voors
- Bob Yaap
- A.J. Wilson
- Allen Amaro

Procurement

- Larry Turner
- Larry Brooks

- Kevin O'Connor
- Bob Mulz
- Alison Boyle
- Jim Stanfield

Outreach

- Ken Jackson
- Jerry Caton
- Mike Johnson
- Gene Farnsworth
- John Rak
- John Robbins
- Jim Stanfield

Closing Remarks

Mr. Gonneville wrapped up the meeting at 2:59 p.m. saying, "We're on a roll, let's keep it going. There's a lot of work to do."

Meeting Adjourned @ 3 p.m.

--The End--